

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 17, 19 and 20 have been examined and are rejected. In particular, claims 17, 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,145,135 to Thompson ("Thompson").

Applicant thanks the Examiner for discussing the aforementioned grounds of rejection with Applicant's representative in a telephonic interview conducted on May 3, 2007 and embodied in an Interview Summary (Form PTOL-413) subsequently mailed on May 11, 2007.

Independent claim 17 is amended to, among other things, recite that "said post is connected to said mounting subassembly by alignment of said post with said mounting subassembly and movement of said post along said mounting subassembly solely in an axial direction until an extended portion of a snap flange located on an outer surface of said mounting bracket snaps into a recess formed through said post, said extended portion of said snap flange being engageable from the exterior of said post to release the connection of said post to said mounting bracket." Thompson fails to disclose, or otherwise suggest, the unique combination of features recited in claim 17 including, for example, a snap flange having an extended portion located on an outer surface of a mounting bracket that snaps into a recess formed through a post, wherein the extended portion of the snap flange would be engageable from the exterior of the post to release the connection of the post to the mounting bracket. Instead, the portion of Thompson that the Examiner relies on as disclosing the recited snap flange, i.e., lock tab 54 (see Office Action: page 2) shows the lock tab 54 as being disposed on an inner surface of the purported mounting bracket, i.e., stub post 50 (see Thompson: Fig. 9), such that the lock tab 54 is not engageable from the exterior of the post 38. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 17 is not anticipated by Thompson and, thus, is patentable over Thompson. Likewise, claims 19 and 20 are patentable over Thompson at least by virtue of their dependency. Claim 20 is being amended to further clarify the features recited therein.

New claims 30-44 are hereby added. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 30-32 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

New claim 33 recites, among other things, that "said post is connected to said mounting subassembly by alignment of said post with said mounting subassembly and sliding movement

of an inner surface of said post along an outer surface of said mounting subassembly solely in an axial direction until a portion of a snap flange located on said mounting bracket snaps into a recess formed through said post.” Thompson fails to disclose, or otherwise suggest, the unique combination of features recited in claim 33 including, for example, a post that is connected to a mounting subassembly by alignment of the post with the mounting subassembly and sliding movement of an inner surface of the post along an outer surface of the mounting subassembly solely in an axial direction until a portion of a snap flange located on a mounting bracket snaps into a recess formed through the post. To the contrary, in Thompson, an outer surface of post 38 slides along an inner surface of the mounting subassembly (i.e., stub post 50) until the purported snap flange, i.e., lock tab 54 snaps into the purported recess, i.e. aperture 56. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that new claim 33 is patentable over Thompson. It is further submitted that new claim 39 is patentable over Thompson at least by virtue of having limitations similar to those set forth above for claim 33. Consequently, new claims 34-38 and 40-44 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

In view of the above, entry and consideration of this Amendment and allowance of claims 17, 19-20 and 30-44 are respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number and/or e-mail address listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 03-0172. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____



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